



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE DECREASE OF INTERSTATE MIGRATION.

THE question of migration, like that of free trade or protection, is frequently discussed on the tacit assumption that some mysterious change occurs when goods or men cross the boundaries of a country. The principles regulating the exchange of commodities or the movements of persons are, however, substantially unaffected by the presence of political lines. Viewed from the ordinary standpoint of politics and legislation, international differ widely from internal movements of goods or persons ; but as manifestations of social forces they are so closely related that results from the study of one may illumine the other. Hence, if interstate migration in the United States is relatively decreasing, and has been for about a score of years—the point I shall attempt to prove, and if this has happened without legislative regulation simply as a result of the action of social and economic forces, the fact, aside from its intrinsic importance, may justify the inference that, even if no further legislation be enacted, international migration, or immigration to the United States from foreign countries, will ultimately and perhaps speedily decrease.

I.

The only materials for a comprehensive study of the amount of interstate migration are afforded by the national census reports since and including 1850, which record the birthplaces by states¹ of the natives of the country. The tables here used are taken from the volume of the census report of 1890 which made its appearance in July, 1895.

The following table gives the general results at the date of each census of the preceding interstate migration : —

¹ For the sake of brevity I have included the territories and the District of Columbia under the generic term state.

DATE.	TOTAL NATIVES OF U. S. IN U. S.	NUMBER LIVING OUTSIDE STATE WHERE BORN.	PER CENT OF TOTAL.
1850 ¹	17,727,578	4,176,841	23.6
1860 ¹	23,353,386	5,829,681	25.0
1870	32,991,142	8,635,457	26.2
1880	43,475,840	9,593,106	22.1
1890 ²	52,966,041	11,094,430	20.9

From this it appears that the percentage of natives living outside the state of birth was 2.7 less in 1890 than it was in 1850. This percentage rose between 1850 and 1870, at the end of which period over one-fourth of the natives were residing in different states from those in which they were born; but during the second score of years it decreased very considerably.

While, then, the number of persons inhabiting different states from those where they were born has steadily increased since 1850, the number of those who remain in their native states has increased since 1870 with considerably greater rapidity. The natives of the United States are showing a greater tendency to remain in the states where they were born. Whether they are also more prone to remain in the native counties or towns is a subject to be considered later. Before taking that up let us try to answer two questions: (1) From what states is this emigration greater than the average for the country? and (2) From what states has it decreased during the last decade?

(1) The general answer to the first question is best indicated by the following map, in which the shaded states are those which sent out a proportion of their native population larger than the average for the entire country.

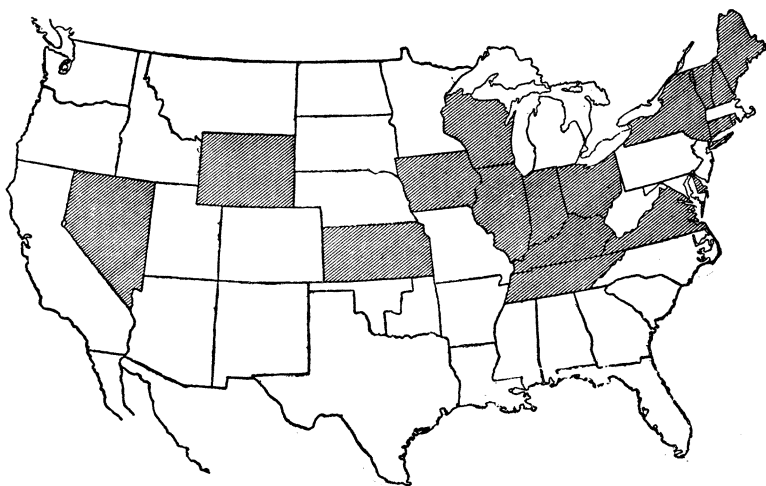
This map indicates that the states east of the Alleghanies sending out more than the average proportion of emigrants are

¹ The figures for 1850 and 1860 do not include the slaves.

² In the figures for 1890 I have omitted the 396,652 natives who did not report the state in which they were born, and the 10,010 who are reported, somewhat oddly, as natives though born at sea or abroad of native parents. No such distinctions appear in earlier census reports.

Virginia, Delaware, New York, and the New England states except Massachusetts ; and that those in the interior lie on both sides of the Ohio River and the upper Mississippi. There are also three isolated states further west.

It further appears that the only northeastern states with a stronger hold than the average upon their native population are those in which mining or manufacturing has notably increased of recent years, *viz.*, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and West Virginia.¹ On the other



STATES WITH MORE EMIGRATION THAN THE AVERAGE FOR THE COUNTRY.

hand, the largest area of excessive interstate migration is in the central states east of the Mississippi. How far the latter fact may be connected with the remarkable facilities for travel by water or rail in those states, and how far with the westward trend of the agricultural interests of the country, must be more or less a matter of conjecture.

The states with more than the average amount of emigration, arranged according to the percentage of natives living outside in 1890, rank as follows :—

¹ The figures for West Virginia are, however, questionable owing to the recent formation of that state. Persons born in what is now West Virginia before its organization as a state may have reported themselves as born in Virginia.

GROUP I.		GROUP II.	
STATES.	PER CENT OF NATIVES LIVING OUTSIDE.	STATES.	PER CENT OF NATIVES LIVING OUTSIDE.
Vermont . . .	40.9	Tennessee . . .	24.7
Nevada . . .	38.1	Wisconsin . . .	24.0
New Hampshire . . .	34.1	New York . . .	23.6
Wyoming . . .	29.8	Kentucky . . .	23.2
Iowa . . .	28.5	Connecticut . . .	23.1
Virginia . . .	28.2	Rhode Island . . .	22.7
Delaware . . .	28.0	Kansas . . .	22.0
Ohio . . .	27.6		
Maine . . .	27.5		
Illinois . . .	27.1		
Indiana . . .	25.9		

The first group includes all the states from which over one-fourth of the natives have emigrated, the second all from which between one-fifth and one-fourth have emigrated, and the two together all from which the emigration has been greater than the average for the whole country.

In interpreting this table it must be remembered that, other things being equal, a state of small area will show a greater amount of migration beyond its bounds than a large state. It is perhaps for this reason that Rhode Island and Connecticut, although manufacturing states, appear in the table. On the other hand, the fact that Texas has sent beyond its bounds a much smaller proportion of its native population than any other state, only 5.2 per cent, is in no small measure to be explained by its great size, which allows wide range within its bounds. The great region of increased migration is found in certain states of the north central group. The increase from some of them during the last decade has been very noteworthy. Illinois, Iowa and Kansas are the most conspicuous. In these states the per cent of the native population living outside was as follows :

	1880.	1890.	INCREASE.
Illinois,	24.47	27.13	2.66
Iowa,	22.77	28.48	5.71
Kansas,	16.51	22.03	5.52

The actual numbers may seem even more striking:

	NATIVES LIVING OUTSIDE.		INCREASE.
	1880.	1890.	
Kansas,	46,085	137,586	91,501
Iowa,	217,389	397,985	180,596
Illinois,	553,889	817,717	263,828

Between 1880 and 1890 over half a million natives of these three states alone must have migrated across a state line, an outflow equal to nearly one-tenth of the total immigration to the United States during the same period. So marked an increase of migration in this great and populous region makes it the more surprising that in the country as a whole interstate migration has diminished.

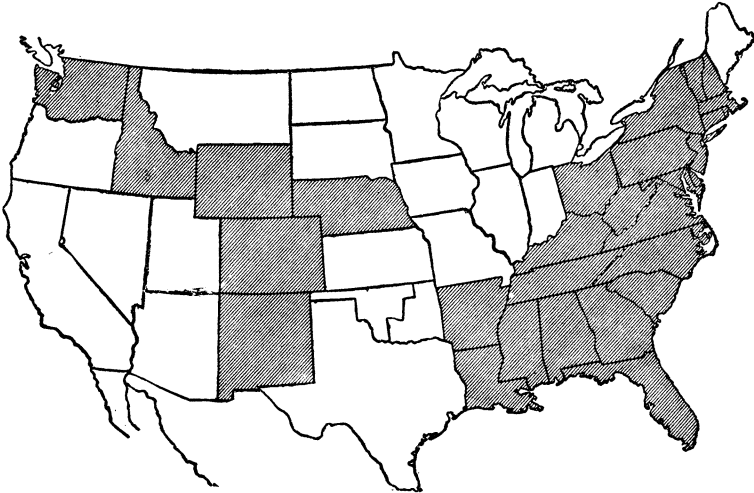
There is a general coincidence between the states which have sent out a large proportion of their natives and those which have shown a small increase of total population. Vermont and Nevada have sent out the largest percentage of emigrants, and at the last census they were the only two states failing to show any material increase of population. Between 1880 and 1890 Nevada lost 16,505 residents, and Vermont gained only 136. Of the twelve states increasing by less than fifteen per cent, ten—all but Maryland and Mississippi—appear among the states with emigration higher than the average. Such coincidences are due not merely to the subtraction of a large number of emigrants from the population, but yet more to the fact that the causes at present encouraging emigration, at least in the Eastern states, also discourage early marriage and the rearing of large families.

(2) Let us turn now to the second question raised above: From what states has emigration decreased during the past decade? This also may be answered best by a map, in which the shaded states are those of which the proportion of natives living outside was less in 1890 than in 1880.

This shows clearly the parts of the country in which the tendency to migrate across state lines has decreased. The six shaded states which make an irregular band across the country from Washington to New Mexico, have been so recently and

incompletely settled that the total of their native population is less than that of Maine or Arkansas. Hence they may be disregarded.¹ The map does, however, show an unbroken stretch of states from Maine to Texas, from which emigration has been relatively decreasing.

In attempting to compare by decades the movements of the populations of the various states, some trouble arises from the incompleteness of the available statistics. Before the emancipation the birthplace of the negroes who were slaves was not reported. Hence the facts for the Southern states in 1850



STATES FROM WHICH EMIGRATION DECREASED BETWEEN 1880 AND 1890.

or 1860 are not easily to be compared with those of the Northern states at that time or with those from any part of the country now. Furthermore it is probable that even at present the number of negroes who are unable to tell the state in which they were born is not inconsiderable. The only states, then, concerning which trustworthy information for the whole period since 1850 may be obtained are those of the northeastern group and a few of the north-central group. We may assume that for each state the decade preceding the

¹ It may be noted in passing that the great prosperity of Nebraska between 1880 and 1890 is illustrated by its retaining a larger proportion of its natives.

census year in which the largest percentage of natives was found residing in another part of the country was the period of maximum emigration. On this assumption that period for each of these states was as follows :

PERIOD OF MAXIMUM EMIGRATION.			
BEFORE 1850.	1850-1860.	1860-1870.	1880-1890.
Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey.	Vermont, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania.	New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, United States.	Maine, Indiana, Illinois.

For all but three states, therefore, the period of greatest emigration was earlier than 1870.

A bit of corroborative evidence covering a slightly longer period of time is furnished by the records of the migration from New England to New York State. By combining information contained in the census reports of New York with other figures from the national census returns, the number of natives of New England resident in New York at successive periods is found to have been as follows :

DATE.	TOTAL NATIVES OF NEW ENGLAND IN UNITED STATES.	NUMBER IN NEW YORK STATE.	PER CENT OF TOTAL.
1845	2,660,441 ¹	228,881 ²	8.60 ¹
1850	2,821,823 ³	206,630 ³	7.32
1855		207,539 ²	
1860	3,144,588 ³	177,981 ³	5.66
1865		166,038 ²	
1870	3,293,003 ³	138,812 ³	4.22
1875		142,136 ²	
1880	3,643,424 ³	133,272 ³	3.63
1890	3,897,003 ³	116,005 ³	2.98

Thus, while the total number of natives of New England has steadily increased, the number residing in New York State

¹ Estimated.

² As given by New York State Censuses.

³ As given by United States Censuses.

has fallen almost one-half, so that of the total natives of New England in the country the proportion residing in New York, as shown by the last column above, is hardly more than one-third of what it was half a century ago.

Interstate migration, then, has relatively decreased during the last score of years both in the country as a whole and in nearly every one of the states east of the Mississippi.

II.

As regards the conclusion just reached it may be said that, even if interstate migration has decreased, it does not follow that what may be termed the mobility of the population, or the tendency to abandon the place of birth, has also decreased. It may simply have expressed itself in a different manner. While the dominant form of migration prior to 1870 was that from east to west, the dominant form since that time has been from the country to the city. The former usually oversteps state lines ; the latter, less regularly. The decrease of interstate migration, then, may be due merely to an increase of what may be termed intrastate migration. This hypothesis¹ seems the more plausible since the states in which large cities have sprung up or have rapidly increased are, generally speaking, the same as those from which a smaller proportion of emigrants than heretofore has gone out.

This criticism, it may be observed, does not deny the main conclusion here contended for, that interstate migration has decreased ; rather, it raises a doubt concerning the proper interpretation of that fact. It might, therefore, be ignored, and the reader left to draw inferences for himself in explanation. Such a course would be the more prudent, since it must be acknowledged that no conclusive answer to the criticism can be wrung from our national census reports. There is no way of determining with accuracy for the whole country the amount

¹ See a striking article in *The Forum*, August, 1895, on "The Drift of Population to Cities," by Henry F. Fletcher.

of migration from the small towns and rural districts of a state to the cities of the same state. In the gathering of information by the national census authorities each state has been treated as a unit, and intrastate migration ignored. Yet, in default of information for the whole country, the facts for New York State, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, derived from their state census reports, suggest the inference that the criticism is invalid; and that the natives of those states, at least, and presumably of others in their neighborhood, are increasingly disposed to remain in the counties or towns in which they were born.

In the New York censuses of 1855, 1865 and 1875 (unfortunately, no census worthy of the name has been taken in New York since 1875), the county was treated as the unit, and the county of birth was recorded for each native of New York State. From these data the following table has been constructed:

DATE.	TOTAL NATIVES OF NEW YORK IN THE STATE.	NUMBER RESIDING IN COUNTY WHERE BORN.	PER CENT OF TOTAL.
1855	2,219,809	1,637,903	73.8
1865	2,642,055	1,998,492	75.8
1875	3,202,704	2,205,719	78.2

During this score of years the proportion of the natives of New York who remained in the county of birth steadily increased. But it must not be forgotten that a state census can take cognizance only of the persons residing within its limits, and that during the above period from half a million to a million natives of New York were residing in other states and territories. I have attempted to introduce a correction by assuming that the number of natives of New York State resident in other states at the date of each state census was the mean between the numbers reported by the national censuses just before and after. By the aid of this assumption I have constructed a table and computed the following percentages:

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NATIVES OF NEW YORK STATE LIVING IN—			
	1855.	1865.	1875.
County of birth	56.0	55.3	57.8
Some other county of New York .	19.9	17.8	16.0
Some other state	24.2	26.5	26.2

This indicates that the proportion of the total natives of New York State residing in the counties where they were born decreased between 1855 and 1865, and that this was owing to the great increase of interstate migration; for the intrastate migration, it will be observed, decreased. It further shows that between 1865 and 1875 the proportion of the natives of New York staying where they were born increased with some rapidity. These figures do not apply to the last twenty years; but just when the New York censuses fail us the Massachusetts censuses begin to be especially valuable.

In Massachusetts, the town, not the county, is the unit in determining birthplace. The facts contained in the Massachusetts census reports of 1875 and 1885 may be expressed more simply than those for New York, as follows:

	1875.	1885.	PER CENT OF INCREASE.
Natives of Massachusetts whose birth-towns were known .	973,011	1,104,733	
Born in towns where residing .	596,971	700,813	17.4
Born elsewhere in Massachu- setts	376,040	403,920	7.4

This shows that during the ten years preceding 1885 the number of migrants from town to town, but within the state, increased less than half as fast as the number who remained in the towns of their births. It has already been said that the proportion of natives of Massachusetts who migrated to some other state reached its maximum in the decade 1850-1860, and has steadily decreased since. The above facts show that intrastate migration has been decreasing during the only decade for which the facts can be ascertained. On the assumption that the number of natives of Massachusetts living in other states in 1875 and 1885 was a mean between the number reported by the national censuses of 1870, 1880 and 1890, the following table may be computed showing

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NATIVES OF MASSACHUSETTS LIVING IN —		
	1875.	1885.
Town of birth	48.61	51.00
Some other town of Massachusetts . .	30.62	29.46
Some other state	20.77	19.54

This indicates that the mobility of the native population of Massachusetts is slowly decreasing ; and in Rhode Island, the only other state in the country, I believe, affording like information, similar results appear.

These figures bring out the remarkable extent of the migratoriness of native Americans. In New York State probably about two-fifths of the native population leave the counties where they are born ; in Massachusetts about one-half abandon the towns of birth. It must be remembered, moreover, that these figures include persons of all ages. The migratory tendency of children under ten, or even under fifteen years of age, is much below the average. To be sure, they are often carried with their parents from the places of birth, but the parents themselves are less likely to migrate than unmarried or childless persons of the same age. The time that has elapsed since birth is also an element. The older one is, the less likely he is to be a resident of his birthplace. Hence if adults alone were considered, the migratory tendency would be expressed by much larger figures than those above.

Nevertheless, the general conclusion to which the facts point is that the mobility of the population of the Eastern states, as measured by the migration from state to state, from county to county, or from town to town, is slowly decreasing.

On the contrary, the information at hand leads me to believe that on the continent of Europe internal migration is increasing. This is certainly true of Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium and France. For example, the proportion of the population of France born in the *département* of residence was :

	PER CENT.
1866	88.4
1876	85.7
1886	84.0
1891	83.2

England shows an almost unchanging internal mobility of population. The percentage of the population born in the county of residence in England and Wales was:

	PER CENT.
1871	74.04
1881	75.19
1891	74.86

These percentages suggest that the maximum mobility of the English population may have been reached in 1871-81. While the English counties and the French *départements* are much too large and too populous for their internal migrations to be fairly comparable with the intercounty migration in New York, the mobility of the natives of the United States is certainly much greater than that of the natives of continental Europe, and probably greater than that of the English. If the mobility of the population of western Europe is slowly increasing, while that of the eastern United States is slowly decreasing, it is but another illustration of the general fact, often brought to the notice of the student of social statistics, that the social and economic conditions of the two regions are in various ways approximating.

WALTER F. WILLCOX.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY.